EVERY WOMAN

WALTER BROWNE

FORREST HUNTER.

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CANTICLE I

Everywoman and her companions: Youth, Beauty and Modesty.

ACTING VERSION OF
HENRY W. SAVAGE'S
PRODUCTION OF

EVERYWOMAN

HER PILGRIMAGE IN QUEST OF LOVE

A
MODERN
MORALITY
PLAY BY
WALTER
BROWNE

NEW YORK
THE H. K. FLY COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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By
WALTER BROWNE.

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INTRODUCTION

WHILE "Everywoman" is absolutely a modern play as regards characterization, action and environments, it is fashioned after the model of the ancient morality plays, those products of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of which "Everyman" is the best known example.

While every character in "Everywoman" is symbolical of various abstract virtues, vices and conditions, I have endeavored to make them also concrete types of actual men and women of the present day. It was my object to present an allegory, in the shape of a stage play, sufficiently dramatic and soul-stirring in its story and action to form an attractive entertainment, quite apart from its psychological significance.

"Everywoman" is intended to afford pleasure and entertainment to all classes of intelligent playgoers—hence the music, the songs, and choruses, the dances, the spectacular and scenic effects, and the realism of every-day life.

It is not a sermon in disguise, neither is it a quixotic effort to elevate the stage. At the same time it is hoped that the play may be found to contain some clean and wholesome moral lessons.

Since the days of chivalry, when knights clashed steel for their lady-loves and went on crusades to prove their

prowess, while they remained secluded in cloisters or in moated castles, womankind, of which the title rôle of this play is intended to be a type, has grown more self-assertive and more bold. To every woman who nowadays listens to flattery, goes in quest of love, and openly lays siege to the hearts of men, this play may provide a kindly warning.

To every man it may suggest an admonition, the text of which is contained in the epilogue to the play:

> "Be merciful, be just, be fair
> To Everywoman, everywhere.
> Her faults are many. Nobody's the blame."

WALTER BROWNE.

NEW YORK,
January, 1911.

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CHARACTERS

(*In the order in which they appear*)

NOBODY

YOUTH, BEAUTY, MODESTY — *Everywoman's companions*

EVERYWOMAN

FLATTERY

TRUTH, *a witch*

KING LOVE THE FIRST

BLUFF, STUFF — *Theatre managers*

PERT, FLIRT, DIMPLES, CURLS, GIGGLE, SHAPE, CURVES, SMILES, SLY — *Chorus girls*

TIME, *a callboy*

WEALTH, *a millionaire*

WITLESS, *a nobleman*

CONSCIENCE, *Everywoman's handmaiden*

CHARACTERS

PASSION, *a play actor*

GROVEL, SNEAK } *Servants*

PUFF, *a press agent*

AGE, GREED, SELF, VANITY } *Society women*

VICE, *"Gay White Way" siren*

LAW, ORDER } *Policemen*

CHARITY, *a minister of the Gospel*

AN important feature of "Everywoman" will be its musical equipment of twenty-six numbers, especially composed by George Whitefield Chadwick, one of the few Americans to achieve high standing as a symphonic writer. The numbers include three solos, a trio, four choruses, a male quartette, several dances, and incidental and entr'acte numbers. For the rendering of the score an orchestra of forty pieces will be employed.

CANTICLE
I

EVERYWOMAN

CANTICLE I

SCENE: *The scene is a room in* EVERYWOMAN'S *home. It is comfortable and artistically furnished. At the back are large windows, open to the ground, through which is seen a picturesque garden in Spring attire. The room is in semi-darkness, but the sun is seen rising above the hills beyond the garden. The light of early dawn illumines the windows, and gradually grows to broad daylight, throughout the action. Left of room is a large open fireplace, with a chimney-seat. At the right an old-fashioned stairway leads to* EVERYWOMAN'S *sleeping-room. A full-length cheval glass, or mirror, stands at left centre. A spinning-wheel R.*

DISCOVERED: *When the curtain divides,* NOBODY *is discovered standing in centre of room. He wears an artistic costume, entirely unlike all existing or accepted fashions, and chiefly designed for comfort and convenience.* NOBODY *is as handsome as he thinks himself, and a better actor than he is willing to admit. He speaks the following prologue:*

NOBODY

Good friends, and I have many such
Who treat me well and love me much,
To introduce myself I first make bold.
I'm Nobody. A sorry wight,
Who reads a woman's fate aright,
For unto him her hidden thoughts are told.
Whatever may be here portrayed,
Remember but a simple maid
Was Everywoman, in her early youth.
If haply she be led astray
'Tis she the penalty must pay,
And Nobody will know the bitter truth.
I ask your patience for our play,
Let Nobody your judgment sway,
For Nobody knows what is just and fair.
If it offend, mine be the blame;
And if it please you, just the same
I promise you that Nobody will care.

(*The sun has risen, and a stream of sunshine illumines a path down the stage. Merry music and singing of birds is heard outside.* YOUTH, BEAUTY *and* MODESTY, *three extremely pretty girls, dressed in simple robes of white, and linked together with garlands of roses, trip from the garden, through the windows, and down the sunlit path in* EVERYWOMAN'S *home. They dance a graceful measure as they sing.* NOBODY *hides his eyes to shut out the sight, and retires to an obscure corner as the maidens advance.*)

YOUTH, BEAUTY AND MODESTY

Born of a sunbeam's purity,
  Beauty, Youth and Modesty.
Three little winsome maidens we,
  Each of sunshine savors.
Linked in a chain of roses, see
  Beauty, Youth and Modesty—
Wouldn't you like to kiss all three?
  Kisses go by favors.

Beauty was made to be kissed, forsooth,
  That's a well established truth,
And you may take your chance with Youth.
  Let Nobody see, oh!
Still, after all, you'd best not try,
  Even though Nobody's nigh,
Or Modesty will surely fly—
  Sweetest of the trio.

Three little foolish fairies see,
  Beauty, Youth and Modesty;
Though but her humble servants we,
  Everywoman heeds us.
Soon as she rises from her rest,
  Each of us a welcome guest,
We are the friends whom she loves best;
  Everywoman needs us.
(*Dance.*)

NOBODY

Youth, Beauty, Modesty, prithee cease
Your singing and your dancing. True it be

That Everywoman needs ye. True, your presence
Makes joyous this, her home, even though I,
Nobody, nightly intrude upon its privacy.
But you have missions more deep than thus to dance
Attendance on Everywoman. Youth, what bringest thou?

YOUTH

I bring to Everywoman happiness.

NOBODY

Happiness! Bah!
Thou bringest folly, Youth, and shouldst be garbed
In cap and bells. Beauty, what bringest thou?

BEAUTY

I bring her admiration, homage, joy.

NOBODY

Not so!
Thou bringest, from her own sex, envy, hatred
For Everywoman. And Modesty, what is thy mission,
Modesty?

MODESTY

In truth, I know not. I came with Youth and Beauty.

NOBODY

Cling close to their skirts, or they may give thee the slip.
Have a care. Trust Nobody.

MODESTY

Indeed, I do.

NOBODY

The night
Is fled, and Everywoman, awaking from her slumbers,
Doth illuminate some hitherto dark corner.
(EVERYWOMAN *laughs outside.*)

NOBODY

List! As the song of the lark proclaimeth dawn,
Doth Everywoman's laughter waken sunshine.
Were I not Nobody, its joyous tones, with rapture
Would thrill my soul.

EVERYWOMAN

(*Appears at the head of the stairs, dressed in a clinging Grecian costume of white. Her hair hangs loosely down. She throws kisses through door.*)

Farewell, sweet dreamland fairies, fare ye well.
At dawn, see! Everywoman flouts ye. In my dreams
I thought myself a flower. And then, anon,
I was a star, to whom men bowed in worship.
Yet again, I thought myself a Queen.
The dawn hath braver stories far to tell,
For, see! I am a woman!—and to be
A woman meaneth flower, star, Queen—
And more, much more, besides.
(*Sees girls, who courtesy.*)

(*Joyfully*)

Ha! There ye are!

(*Coming downstairs*)

Welcome, sweet companions mine. Most lovingly Everywoman greets ye.

Thou, sweet Youth, whom first I met at my mother's knee.

(*Taking* YOUTH'S *hand*)

Dost know they say I stole thee from her, and that is why she did grow gray?

YOUTH

Nay, Everywoman, to thyself be just. Thy mother married well, and she bore children. What further need had she of Youth?

EVERYWOMAN

But thou wilt never desert me, sweet Youth? Nor thou, my Beauty?

(*Taking* BEAUTY'S *hand*)

But that I feared to offend these twain, I might call Beauty Everywoman's best friend, even though some have deemed thee fickle.

(*To* MODESTY)

Modesty, come hither.

(*Takes* MODESTY'S *hands*)

Nay, do not hang thy head. Thou'rt welcome, though perchance thou camest to me somewhat later than thy companions. When wert thou born, sweet Modesty?

MODESTY

In truth, I know not; when or whence I came, I cannot tell. Nobody knows.

EVERYWOMAN

Nobody? That fellow here again! See how he turns away, as if to hide us from his sight.

(*Earnestly*)

I hate Nobody!

MODESTY

But why?

EVERYWOMAN

Hush! Let me tell ye a secret.

(*Gathering maids around her*)

Nobody is in love with me.

BEAUTY

(*shocked*)

Oh! That is truly terrible!

YOUTH

Just think! If Nobody should marry thee!

EVERYWOMAN

I vow that would be much against my will. In truth, methinks that while I have you, my Youth and Beauty,

(*placing an arm around each*)

I surely may escape a fate so horrible. Still, I am miserable when Nobody is nigh.

YOUTH

And I!

BEAUTY

And I!

MODESTY

Yet I feel safe with him.

EVERYWOMAN

Thou'rt right. Modesty is safe with Nobody. Yet, when Nobody is nigh, what need hath Everywoman of Modesty?

MODESTY

Then prithee bid him go hence.

EVERYWOMAN

I will.

(*To* NOBODY)

This, sir, is Everywoman's home,
Which Nobody dares to enter uninvited.
Nobody intrudes—

(*pointing to windows*)

Begone!

NOBODY

(*Coming down tragically.*)

Everywoman,

(*Girls utter little screams, and scatter.*)

There shall come a time when thou,
Deserted by Youth, forsaken by Beauty, and with Modesty
Forgotten, shalt know that Nobody is thy friend.
There shall surely come a time when, worn
And weary with worldly cares, thou shalt love Nobody.

To thee a time shall come when, at thy cry
For help, for comfort, Nobody shall come.
When on this breast thine aching head shall rest;
When Nobody shall brush thy tears away.

GIRLS

(*shudder*)

Ah!

NOBODY

(*turning to* YOUTH)

Thou, Youth,
Thy kisses shall lose their fragrance. Beware of Time.

(*To* BEAUTY)

Beauty! Thy cheeks shall fade, when rose leaves fall.

(*To* MODESTY)

Modesty! Assassins lie in wait for thee.

(*Goes up stage*)

Remember—
Nobody hath warned ye. Nobody hath spoken. Be sure 'tis true.

(*Exits.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Bah! An arrant knave, that man. His threats absurd. Methinks I should have used a woman's weapons on his sneering face, but that thou, my Modesty, didst hold me back.

YOUTH

My kisses grow less fragrant! Stuff and nonsense!

BEAUTY

My cheeks to fade! Why, I positively blush to think of it!

MODESTY

And treacherous death for me! How to escape it?

EVERYWOMAN

Methinks thou shouldst wear armor, Modesty, beneath thy gown, which, with its frills and furbelows, little betokens thy nature. Why, thou art dressed as gaily as thy gladsome companions. Fie, Miss Modesty!

(*Laughs; goes to spinning-wheel.*)

MODESTY

(*hiding her face on* BEAUTY'S *breast*)

With shame I burn.

BEAUTY

Nay, Everywoman, methinks thou chidest
Our sister Modesty unjustly. Why should she mope?
In sackcloth go, or wear a coat of mail?

YOUTH

Beauty is right. True Modesty, armed in purity,
Need not be prim and prudish.

(*Goes to* EVERYWOMAN)

And thou, sweet Everywoman,
If thou wouldst happy be, let gay Youth lead thee.
There is thy mirror; prithee, gaze in that.

MODESTY

(*intercepting her*)

Nay, Everywoman, Modesty bids thee shun
Thy mirror as thou wouldst a plague.

EVERYWOMAN

A plague, sayest thou, Miss Modesty? I'd have thee know
I have no fear to gaze upon myself.
Come, Youth and Beauty, we at least will look
Upon our fair reflections in the glass.
While Everywoman hath such sweet companions
Her mirror is her best and bravest friend.

(EVERYWOMAN, YOUTH *and* BEAUTY *pose before mirror.*)

How say ye, dears? What think ye of my form?

YOUTH

Divine!

EVERYWOMAN

This pose, or that—which suits me best?

BEAUTY

Where both are perfect, how is one to choose?

EVERYWOMAN

What of my face?

YOUTH

'Twould waken envy in an angel.

EVERYWOMAN

Then my hair?

BEAUTY

Like threads of burnished gold.

EVERYWOMAN

How likest thou mine eyes?

YOUTH

Twin lakes of loveliness.

EVERYWOMAN

Fie, Youth! But look! Look in the mirror, once more.
What marvel's this? A stranger!

(The surface of the mirror changes, and standing within the frame, FLATTERY *is seen. He is gaily dressed as a courtier. The maidens stand spellbound,* YOUTH *and* BEAUTY *clinging to* EVERYWOMAN. MODESTY, *behind her, places a shawl over her bosom.)*

FLATTERY

(bowing lowly, in smooth, persuasive tones, speaks)

No stranger, I. When not on active duty,
Attending my lord and master, King Love the First,
Within the magic of a maiden's mirror
I make my home.

EVERYWOMAN

Who art thou?

FLATTERY

My name is Flattery.

MODESTY

Oh! Everywoman, I pray thee, harken not to this man,
For though his tongue be sweet, his heart is false.

EVERYWOMAN

Silence, fool!

(bowing)

Sir Flattery. What wouldst with me?
And why my mirror, rather than any other,
Hast thou been bold to haunt?

FLATTERY

Ask Youth and Beauty.

YOUTH

Nay, I vow I know not Flattery.

BEAUTY

Nor I, forsooth.

FLATTERY

I come as Herald of King Love the First,
A mighty monarch, whose power more potent is
Than that of earthly rulers.
This the missive which he bade me bring:
"To Everywoman go, oh, Flattery," quoth he,
"And bid her seek me where her fancy or
Her whim shall best suggest my hiding place.
To her then shalt thou tell how Love the First

Would have her journey to his bright domain,
That she may reign as Queen for evermore."
Love awaits thee, Everywoman. He would have
Thee sit beside him on his gilded throne,
Dwell with him, a crown of bliss upon thy head.
Love longs for thee! Oh, Everywoman, therefore go
Out into the world and seek him. Seek thy King.
Seek everywhere, for everywhere his throne
Is raised. Great is his Kingdom;—but beware!
Love's ways are strange. He travels incognito.

(Vision begins to fade.)

And now, farewell!
Thy mirror tells thee truly, Love awaits,
Waits Everywoman. Seek him. Fare thee well.

(He vanishes.)

(The mirror again reflects the images of the maidens.)

EVERYWOMAN

(*rapturously*)

Love awaits me! Oh, look! Sweet companions mine,

(going to mirror)

Am I not beautiful? The mirror tells me so,
Even though Flattery hath fled. Love would make me a queen.
And should I keep His Majesty waiting? Nay.
I will obey his Herald. I will seek him.

MODESTY

I pray thee, Everywoman, heed not the wiles of Flattery.
Hast thou not heard that Flattery is false—a tool of the tempter?

EVERYWOMAN

Stop thy prating, Modesty. What dost thou know of Love? I tell thee I will go. Come, Youth and Beauty. Ye shall be my companions in the quest.

(*She embraces them.*)

MODESTY

Oh! Mistress mine, this is the first time thou hast turned from me.

EVERYWOMAN

Forgive me, Modesty. For a moment I had forgotten how faithful and how sweet hath been thy friendship.

(*Bends over* MODESTY *and kisses her.*)

Cheer up, for thou shalt surely share my pilgrimage. But Everywoman must obey when Love commands.

BEAUTY

And whither shall we seek this mighty monarch?

EVERYWOMAN

Ah! Where, indeed?

YOUTH

I have been told that Love is most readily found in the playhouses of the great cities.

MODESTY

Youth, thou art foolish!

YOUTH

Nay. In very truth, I have heard it said that Love is actually MADE by play actors—made from nothing at

all. Conjured up, so to speak, as magicians summon mighty spirits, with a few wondrous words.

EVERYWOMAN
(*vastly interested*)

Is that true? Sweet Youth, how dost thou know these marvellous things?

BEAUTY

Trust Youth to let no whisper of Love escape her.

EVERYWOMAN

Ah! But is that Love, the King?

MODESTY

No, Everywoman. Knowest thou not that there are many pretenders to his throne?

EVERYWOMAN

Many anxious to share it with him, I trow.
'Tis those whom he favors least that slander him.
I sat in the garden yonder, at eventide,
Absorbed in a volume of fairy lore, "The Kingdom
Of Love," 'twas called, and as, entranced, I read,
Idly kicking pebbles into a moss-grown well,
A witch appeared.

GIRLS
(*in awe*)

A witch!

EVERYWOMAN

She must have been a witch, for she hobbled on crutches, and said uncanny things.

YOUTH

What said she?

BEAUTY

Prithee, tell us. Do.

EVERYWOMAN

"I am Everywoman's neglected neighbor," quoth she. "My name is Truth."

MODESTY

'Tis said Truth liveth in a well. Thy wanton pebbles angered her.

EVERYWOMAN

She angered me. She dared to scoff at "Love's Kingdom." Dared to say that maidens' hearts were oft-times wrecked, seeking its treacherous shores.

MODESTY

They say that Truth is a famous fortune-teller.

EVERYWOMAN

Why, yes. I have heard one hath but to peer into the fathoms of her well to see all manner of strange things. Oh! it will be fun! Come, let us consult with Truth.

YOUTH

Alas! I fear it may be too late. As we traveled, Beauty and I, across thy garden, we heard Truth complain that her well was dry.

BEAUTY

"There is no home for Truth, nowadays," she moaned. "I am an outcast."

EVERYWOMAN

Hist! I will tell ye a secret. Modesty, stop thine ears, for I vow it is scandal I am about to tell.

YOUTH AND BEAUTY

Yes! Yes! Go on!

EVERYWOMAN

Know ye not that Truth abides with Nobody?

YOUTH

How shocking!

BEAUTY

Let us then seek her in his abode.

MODESTY

Fie! I'll not believe it. Oh! Everywoman, abandon this mad pilgrimage in search of Love. It is more maidenly that thou shouldst await his coming. Stay home with me. If king he really be, and would make thee his queen, he will not fail to find thee.

EVERYWOMAN

Silence! Thou hast prated enough. I love thee, Modesty, but if I am to be mated with a king, I know not if I shall have much need of thee. Youth, thou shalt be my guide. To the City we will go.

MODESTY

Thou wilt forsake thy Modesty?

EVERYWOMAN

Heaven forbid! Nay!

(*To* MODESTY)

Thou shalt come, too, if thou art not afraid. We will seek within the playhouses. There Youth and Beauty will surely be welcome, and, Modesty, we will try to smuggle thee in with us. With such companions, Everywoman cannot fail to find King Love the First. Come,

(*leading the way*)

let us away.

NOBODY

(*appears in their path to stop them. Holding up his hands, he cries*)

Pause, Everywoman! Thou are rushing to thy fate. I alone can save thee.

EVERYWOMAN

Thou hast no power. Thou art Nobody. Let me pass.

NOBODY

Wait a while.

(*Calls.*)

Truth! Oh, Truth! Come hither!

(TRUTH *hobbles in at the window. She is an ugly old witch, on crutches, and she carries a whip with nine lashes.*)

NOBODY

Speak, Truth.

TRUTH

Everywoman, thou hast listened to Flattery. Nobody can save thee! Listen to Truth.

EVERYWOMAN

Art thou indeed Truth? I did not know thou were so old and ugly.

On crutches, too! Comes Truth with a nine-lashed whip?

What wouldst thou? Scourge me?

TRUTH

No. The lash of Truth is for self-inflicted torture. This crutch it were not necessary if Youth and Beauty would uphold Truth.

(*Girls sneer.*)

Listen! Everywoman longs for Love. Love is born of Truth.

I have a son——

EVERYWOMAN

A son, thou! Is he a dwarf, then? Misshapen! crippled! The gnarled and crazy offspring of a witch?

Love is a king, godlike in his manly perfection. Begone! When I have need of thee, I'll come to thee.

TRUTH

Thou wilt come, and come alone. Flout Truth now, but beware the time when thou shalt seek Flattery in thy mirror, and find only Truth. Flattery hath cajoled thee, fooled thee. 'Tis his whim to play upon Everywoman's lack of wisdom. Turn to thy mirror once more.

(*Vision of* FLATTERY *again appears in the mirror.*)

TRUTH

See! Flattery again smileth on thee.

(EVERYWOMAN *turns to mirror.*)

FLATTERY

(*in mirror*)

Love awaits thee. Seek thy king.

TRUTH

Now, look at me. Thou canst not see me now.

EVERYWOMAN

(*looking at* TRUTH.)

'Tis true. I hear her voice, but she has vanished. How strange!

TRUTH

Not strange. Inevitable. When Flattery appeareth to Everywoman,

To her is Truth invisible. But Truth is strong,
Patient, enduring and merciful, passing merciful,
To those who, in their tribulations, turn to her.
Truth is the only comfort of the world-weary.
Truth hath spoken. Thou wilt hear her voice again.
Pray, Everywoman, pray that it may not be too late.
(*at window*)
Everywoman—wilt come?

EVERYWOMAN
(*hesitating*)
Yes, yes,—I——

FLATTERY
Love awaits thee.

TRUTH
(*beckoning*)
Everywoman, wilt talk with Truth?

EVERYWOMAN
I hear thy voice—but I see thee not.

TRUTH
Youth, Beauty—who will follow Truth?
(*Exits by window.*)

MODESTY
I—I will——
(*About to follow.*)

BEAUTY

(*detaining* MODESTY)

Be not so foolish. Truth is a witch——

YOUTH

(*detaining* MODESTY)

And most unpleasant at times.

TRUTH

(*outside*)

Who will follow Truth? Who loves Truth rather than Flattery?

NOBODY

(*sardonically*)

Nobody.

(*Exits after* TRUTH.)

EVERYWOMAN

Come, sweet companions. Wherefore should we heed the croaking of a witch? Flattery is shapely and well formed,

(*bowing to* FLATTERY)

what then of the King whom he serves?

FLATTERY

King Love the First awaits thee.

EVERYWOMAN

Yes! yes! Then Everywoman goes in quest of Love. Youth, my daintiest gown lay out; my most becoming hat.

(YOUTH *goes up stairway.*)

Beauty, wilt thou prepare such tricks of toilet as may
make me look my best?

(BEAUTY *goes up stairway.*)

Modesty, rob the garden for a nosegay. Nay? Then
just one little flower for my hair. Quick! quick!
The King awaits.

(MODESTY *goes into garden.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Sir Flattery, wilt thou lead my soul, enraptured,
Lead me to the place where Love is found?
Where his stronghold? How may he be captured?
Stands his palace on enchanted ground?
By what token shall I recognize him?
Does he wait me with outstretched arms?
Or perchance in slumber to surprise him,
Will he awaken to a maiden's charms?
See, I humbly bow my head before thee.
Thank thee for the message thou dost bring.
Lead Everywoman rightly, I implore thee;
Lead her to Love—to Love the First, her King.
(*Kneels before* FLATTERY *in attitude of prayer.*)

(TRUTH *enters at window with* KING LOVE *dressed in Roman attire toga.*)

TRUTH

Behold, my son, King Love, see! At Flattery's feet she kneels. Thou art too late. She is lost. Everywoman who yields to Flattery is lost to thee, true Love.

CURTAIN

CANTICLE
II

CANTICLE II—*"We have engaged, at too high a price, a lade for leading parts* ***Everywoman is costly."***

CANTICLE II

SCENE: *The scene is a stage of a metropolitan theatre, in the forenoon. The scenery and effects are grouped about it in disorder. A large artificial rock stands in the centre of the stage.*

DISCOVERED: NOBODY *and* BLUFF; *latter at table writing.*

NOBODY

Good friends, no doubt you are surprised to see,
Within a modern city playhouse, me.
It merely is a plan to show you here
Another phase of Everywoman's career.
Know ye, a special privilege this means?
Few are allowed to peep behind the scenes,
Tho' "all the world's a stage." Still, you must know
You are not here to see a puppet show.
This is rehearsal time. The actors, they
Are now themselves, and not the parts they play.
Their masks are off. Their faces free from paint.
Yet oftentimes the sinner acts the saint.
I pray you, judge between them. Mark them well.
If you should fail—why—nobody will tell.

(*Exits.*)

(STUFF, *theatre manager, enters L.*)

STUFF

(*approaching with outstretched arms*)
Ah, Bluff, my brother manager, I give thee greeting.

BLUFF

And I, good Stuff, exceedingly rejoice to see my partner's face enwreathed in smiles.
(*They shake hands.*)

STUFF

It hath not rained o' nights within a month. Our coffers are full to overflowing, our success assured. Therefore, let us cut down expenses.

BLUFF

'Tis well spoken. Thou hast rare managerial instinct, untrammeled by art. But where to begin?

STUFF

We have engaged, at too high a price, a jade for leading parts. Everywoman is costly.

BLUFF

But Everywoman is a star.

STUFF

Everywoman thinks she is. With thy aid, Bluff, she hath risen to some eminence. Without it——

BLUFF

Nay, Stuff. Although I will admit I have been of service to the wench, it is to a certain scribe, named Puff, that she owes her rapid rise.

STUFF

That fellow hath made more stars than there are in the heavens. Well, perhaps it were not safe to meddle with Everywoman. What about Ambition?

BLUFF

A clever actress she.

STUFF

Perhaps; but too earnest and too serious to be popular with a pleasure-loving public. Hast thou observed how thin she grows, and how ill clothed she is?

BLUFF

True; she draws no patronage, and therefore little pay. To cut her salary would be like taking nothing from nothing. We might cheapen Conceit.

STUFF

Conceit! He who is ever ready to play each actor's part on emergency, or otherwise? Nay. Conceit is useful in a theatre. Rather will we lop off such heads in the chorus as displease us. Where is thy list?

BLUFF

'Tis here. But let us first observe their paces. Then, at roll call, we may weed them out.

(*Calls loudly*) Lights, lights!

Act One. Opening Chorus.

(BLUFF *and* STUFF *stand R. and L. of stage. Chorus of girls, dressed in the typical costumes of conventional modern musical comedy, enter as they sing.* YOUTH *and* BEAUTY *are at each end of the line.* MODESTY *is in the centre.*)

CHORUS

Two and two, at its cue,
Come the chorus into view.
Sly of eye, not too shy,
All to win our favors try.
Young and gay, bald and gray,
Not a man but does adore us:
Pays his toll, sells his soul,
For the merry, merry chorus.

We sing, tra-la! and hey-down-derry.
We laugh, ha! ha! with lips like cherry.
We dance, we prance, we seem so merry,
But some, perchance, are not so very.
We know not what is before us,
For life is short in the chorus.
(*Dance, after which chorus stands in line.*)

BLUFF

Ye will answer to your names. Flirt, Pert, Dimples, Shape, Curves, Smiles, Sly, Curls, Giggles, Youth, Beauty, Modesty.

(*As* BLUFF *calls, each of the girls responds, saying "Here!"*)
(MODESTY *remains silent, looking down.*)

STUFF
Modesty! Modesty! Where are thou?

PERT
(*to* MODESTY)
Be not afraid, you little silly.

FLIRT
(*to* MODESTY)
Give 'em a sly wink, thus. Go on!

BLUFF
Speak up! Where is Modesty?
(FLIRT *and* PERT, *laughingly, taking* MODESTY *by the arms and pushing her toward C.*)

FLIRT AND PERT
Here she is, good sirs.
(BLUFF *and* STUFF *go up to* MODESTY *and critically examine her through eyeglasses.*)

STUFF
Humph! Methinks thou art a stranger here. How camest thou in the chorus?

MODESTY
(*proudly*)
I am the friend of Everywoman.

(*Girls giggle.*)

BLUFF

A friend of Everywoman! A pretty qualification. I suppose she brought thee hither. Did she?

MODESTY

She did.

STUFF

What airs these stars give themselves!

BLUFF

(*to* MODESTY)

Thou art pretty enough, but too prim, and out of place in the chorus. So get thee gone.

MODESTY

Nay, I pray thee! Let me stay with Everywoman.

STUFF

What canst thou do? Play boys, in hose and doublet?

MODESTY

Alas! No! no!

BLUFF

Pose on thy toes, in ballet skirts and tights?

MODESTY

I fear me not.

STUFF

Perchance, thou canst elevate thy heels above thy head?

MODESTY

No, sirs; but I can sing very sweetly.

BLUFF

Sing! In the chorus? Bah! Absurd!

STUFF

(*to girls*)

Doth anybody know this wench?

YOUTH

(*stepping forward*)

May it please you, sirs, Modesty hath ever been my best companion.

(*Puts arm around* MODESTY.)

BEAUTY

(*stepping forward*)

I, too, have cherished her. If she goes, I go with her.

(*Puts her arm around* MODESTY)

YOUTH

And I.

BLUFF

What's this? Mutiny! Your names! Tell quickly!

YOUTH

I am Youth.

BEAUTY

And Beauty I.

STUFF

Youth and Beauty. Nay, but we must have ye, at least, in the chorus. We need ye, but not your rebellious friend; so, perforce, we must rob ye of your companion. Dimples, Curves, Shape, all—away with Modesty!

(BLUFF *seizes* YOUTH, STUFF *seizes* BEAUTY. *Chorus girls surround* MODESTY, *and hustle her toward rock in centre of stage. When they again separate,* MODESTY *has vanished.*)

BLUFF

(*detaining* YOUTH, *who struggles and weeps*)

Nay, grieve not, little one, for the loss of thy prudish friend, and thou shalt on terrapin sup. Thou shalt sip sweet nectar with sages of the city, or with such gilded youths as would not brook that Modesty be thy chaperon.

STUFF

(*detaining* BEAUTY, *who struggles and weeps*)

In mighty motor cars shalt thou dash through the midnight air, more cosily than if Miss Modesty were by thy side. Come, dry thy tears, and join thy gayer companions. Flirt, take charge of Beauty.

BLUFF

Pert, we commend Youth to thy keeping. Girls, keep Youth and Beauty with you, and you shall find favor with your managers.

(PERT *and* FLIRT *take charge of* YOUTH *and* BEAUTY. *Chorus sings.*)

One by one, Beauty gone,
Long forgotten, loved by none,
Fading fast. Pleasures past,
Goes the chorus home at last.

(*Exit Chorus, with* YOUTH *and* BEAUTY.)

BLUFF

(*calling*)

Principals! Where are our principals?

STUFF

Where, indeed!

BLUFF

What ho! Time! Time! thou antiquated callboy!

(TIME *enters slowly and solemnly.*)

Oh! There thou art, old Father Time!

STUFF

Time hath summoned all manner of mummers to enact strange scenes on the stage of life, and rung down many tragic curtains.

BLUFF

Yet all must obey his call.

(*to* TIME)

Go, find Ambition, arouse Passion, summon Everywoman. Call Conceit.

(TIME *exits. To* STUFF)

They say Time flies. This side of the footlights methinks he crawls.

STUFF

A plague upon our principals! Passion is a sluggard before high noon. Ambition is sick, and sleepeth. Conceit lingereth in his dressing-room. Everywoman followeth her own whims, and snappeth her fingers at punctuality. Come, Bluff, let us to lunch.

BLUFF

Aye! They starve who wait on stars, and I am hungry. Come.

EVERYWOMAN

(*speaks outside L.*)

Wealth, bid the chauffeur wait. Stage door? Certainly not! Am I not a star? My Lord Witless, to thy care I confide Hanky-Panky. Thou knowest the saying, "Love me, love my dog."

BLUFF

(*to* STUFF)

Here comes Everywoman, our star.

STUFF

(*to* BLUFF)

Our star! Egad! She twinkleth not, but flashes upon one like an entire constellation.

EVERYWOMAN

(*outside*)

What sayest thou, Wealth? Thou wouldst see a stage, with all its gay trappings, exposed to the merciless light of day? Well, come along, then. It's against the rules, but Everywoman's delight is to break the laws of conventionality.

(*Enters, richly attired in modern furs and wraps. Her hair is dressed in the latest fashion.*)

(WEALTH *enters, smoking a big cigar.* WITLESS *enters, carrying a Boston terrier.* CONSCIENCE, EVERYWOMAN'S *handmaiden, enters, and stands aloof.*)

STUFF

So, Everywoman, thou art here at last?

EVERYWOMAN

(*flippantly*)

Hello, Stuff! Hello, Bluff! Conscience——

(*turning*)

Where is my faithful handmaiden? Art a prey to stage fright, even at rehearsal time, little one? These are only managers. They'll not bite thee, girl. Here, take my gloves.

(*Gives gloves to* CONSCIENCE.)

STUFF

I say, thou'rt here at last!

EVERYWOMAN

At last! In truth, I seem to be first. But if I am late——

STUFF

Late! Thou art always late.

EVERYWOMAN

Then call the rehearsal off. Another day will do. Conscience, my gloves again.

BLUFF

(*detaining her*)

Nay, stay! But who are these intruders whom thou bringest?

(*to* WITLESS)

Young man, puppies are forbidden behind the scenes.

STUFF

(*to* WEALTH)

Smoking in theatres, by any but managers, is a heinous offence.

EVERYWOMAN

But these are friends of mine.

BLUFF

No matter. Outside the stage door alone may satellites dance attendance on a star.

EVERYWOMAN

Hist! Come hither, Bluff and Stuff. Dost thou not know Wealth? The multi-millionaire? The big one, he. Hast heard of Lord Witless, heir to a dukedom? He fondles my dog.

BLUFF

Is't really Wealth?

(*doffing hat*)

Welcome, Wealth, thrice welcome. Wouldst inspect our humble playhouse? It is entirely at thy disposal.

STUFF

(*to* WITLESS, *doffing hat*)

My lord, prithee, make thyself at home. Shall I summon the ladies of the chorus for thy distinguished entertainment?

WITLESS

(*with blasé drawl*)

No, thanks. I have no desire to make Everywoman jealous.

STUFF

A noble sentiment. And still some scoff at birth and breeding.

BLUFF

(*to* WEALTH)

Thou wilt observe these are the wings.

EVERYWOMAN

Most interesting to a prospective angel. Eh, Bluff?

STUFF

(*to* WITLESS)

The footlights, these.

EVERYWOMAN

Whose fascinating glamor oft scorches the wings of foolish young gadflies. So beware.

WEALTH

(*up C.*)

What's this?

BLUFF

A rock.

WEALTH

(*tapping rock*)

Hollow, egad!

BLUFF

Take care, Wealth! Touch nothing on the stage, or thou wilt soil thy hands.

EVERYWOMAN

(*aside to* BLUFF)

More likely the touch of Wealth should soil the stage.

WITLESS

I'd no idea it was so beastly dingy behind the scenes.

EVERYWOMAN

But thou hast only looked on the gilt and tinsel of life's stage.

WEALTH

No carpet on the floor! It is not meet that Everywoman should drag her dainty garments through such dirt.

EVERYWOMAN

She must. That is the penalty an actress invariably pays.

WEALTH

But I, Wealth, would pave thy path with roses.

EVERYWOMAN

Like those made by pale-faced factory girls.

BLUFF

But, sire, when the play begins all here is elegance and brilliancy.

STUFF

We pride ourselves upon our lavish Mise-en-scene.

WEALTH

What's that?

EVERYWOMAN

The unreal glare and glitter which puts even sunshine to shame. The shams so cunningly devised that nature is outdone. But, there, Wealth and Witless, it is not meet that thou shouldst learn all the tricks—see the pitifully mean surroundings midst which Everywoman must earn her daily bread, much as it is behind the curtain of everyday life. Get ye gone!

WEALTH

Wealth is at Everywoman's command.

(*Bowing and going.*)

WITLESS

Witless obeys Everywoman.

(*Going.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Oh, Wealth! To-night I entertain. Wilt sup with me?

WEALTH

Right heartily, if thou but promise that I shall foot the bill.

EVERYWOMAN

And thou, my Lord Witless?

WITLESS

Charmed! charmed!

EVERYWOMAN

Bluff and Stuff, escort my friends to the door.

(BLUFF *and* STUFF *bow* WEALTH *and* WITLESS *off L.*)

STUFF

This way, my Lord!

BLUFF

The exit is ill lighted and awkwardly designed. Have a care, Wealth, lest thou fall.

(WEALTH *and* WITLESS *exit.*)

STUFF

(*aside to* BLUFF)

If he but fall for our designs, Heaven help him, for he will speedily become——

BLUFF

What?

STUFF

An angel.

(*Both exit.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Conscience! Oh! there thou art, Conscience. Hie thee to my dressing-room. 'Tis stuffy, and unfit for habitation. Bring my toilet table here. I fain would beautify myself, for who can tell—he, the King whom I seek, may come to-day.

(CONSCIENCE *re-enters followed by Property Boy carrying table.*)

See to my hair, wench. The wind hath ruffled it. Canst sing to me? 'Tis said that Conscience hath a still, small voice, but oft 'tis wondrous sweet. Sing to me of a little star—a star that wanders through the night in search of love.

(*Sits in chair, takes off hat.*)

CONSCIENCE.

(*sings*)

A little star crept out one night,
And wondered at the full moon's light.
With fear it twinkled, at first, but soon
It grew as bold as the great big moon;
For not a cloud was in the sky.
And as it shone down from afar,
The heavens seemed to magnify
The light of that little star.

The little star looked down on Earth,
Rejoicing in its heavenly birth.
"Ye mortals," she cried, "now bend the knee.
I bid ye bow, and worship me.
For I am Queen of the realms above."
And as it twinkled from afar,
E'en little children learned to love
The light of that little star.

The little star, at dawn of day,
Slowly began to fade away;
Its life of glory just begun,
It died beneath the blazing sun.
But if a star a soul enshrines,
Through Heaven's gate, ajar,
Seeking there for Love, still shines
The light of that little star.

EVERYWOMAN

There, that will do; send Youth and Beauty to me.

(CONSCIENCE *exits, R.*)

In truth, it seemeth folly thus to daily leave the sunshine of life for the mockery of this dingy stage. Nay, not so. No greater art than acting, when 'tis linked with truth; no nobler structure than the stage; no mission in which Everywoman may engage more worthy and more holy when each part she plays is garbed by modesty.

(*Enter* YOUTH *and* BEAUTY.)

Ah!—my Youth and Beauty! But in tears! Why, what's the matter, sweet companions mine? Time hath not dealt harshly with ye! What is it, then? Have Bluff and Stuff dared offer slight to Youth and Beauty?

YOUTH

They have robbed us of Modesty.

BEAUTY

Spirited her away.

EVERYWOMAN

No! Is it really true that Modesty,
Our sweet companion, hath been banished hence?
How went she, then, and whither?

YOUTH

That, alas! we know not.

BEAUTY

As we pleaded in defence of her,
Our wrists, our forms, were seized by iron hands.

YOUTH

Rude arms encircled our waists, and when again
Our freedom came, we looked in vain for Modesty.

EVERYWOMAN

Not fitted even for a chorus girl!
Why do the good and true play such small parts
Upon the stage of life? I am a star.
Success hath crowned my efforts in the art
Which I have chosen. Fame is mine, and yet—
Love's yet unfound. Oh! Beauty, Youth,
Companions sweet, who still are with me, bring,
I pray ye, bring at once the mighty monarch
Whom I seek. Everywoman must and will find Love.

YOUTH

Hast seen the actor, Passion? Hast noted how
He gazes on thee?

EVERYWOMAN

Yes!

YOUTH

It may be him thou seekest?

EVERYWOMAN

True. Why, then,
My quest is o'er. Well favored, is he not?
He bears himself right royally. He sings divinely.

YOUTH

That's true. But 'tis for thee to judge. Hast felt
Embarrassment in his presence?

EVERYWOMAN

Why, yes. My heart
Leaps upward at his voice. His lightest touch
Awakens strange emotions—longings, yearnings,
Hitherto unknown. Comes Love like that?

(MODESTY, *chained and imprisoned, is dimly seen, like a vision, within rock, C.*)

MODESTY

No, Everywoman, no!

EVERYWOMAN

Hark! Modesty speaketh.

MODESTY

Beware of Passion. Passion is not Love.

EVERYWOMAN

Sweet Modesty! Then thou are near us still?

MODESTY

Aye, while thou wilt. Though fettered and imprisoned,
Banished by man, still shalt thou hear my voice,
Oh, Everywoman, till thou thyself shalt say,
Begone!

EVERYWOMAN

(*petulantly*)

Why art thou hidden? Why and where?
Was I not ever wishful of thy company?
Did I not hold thy judgment in respect?
Didst not advise me in the matter of dress,
Which is nearest to the heart of Everywoman?
Why play hide and seek, when I would fain
Consult thee on my costume for our next play?
If in truth thou watchest over me, tell me how
Likest thou this?

(*Throws off wrap, and appears in modern ballroom attire, decolette, and in the latest and most daring fashion, brilliantly bedecked with diamonds. Vision of* MODESTY *fades away.* YOUTH *and* BEAUTY *take* EVERYWOMAN'S *hat and wraps, murmuring admiration as she poses.* CONSCIENCE *enters with table, mirror, etc.*)

BEAUTY

It is ravishingly beautiful.

YOUTH

And so, in truth, art thou, O Everywoman!

EVERYWOMAN

Yet Modesty is silent.

(*To* YOUTH)

These to my dressing-room take.
There thou'lt find rare flowers which Wealth hath sent me,
And sweetmeats, too, from my Lord Witless.

YOUTH
(*to* BEAUTY)
We
Are but young and pretty, still many pay us homage;
She is a star, therefore all men worship her.
(*Exeunt* YOUTH *and* BEAUTY.)

EVERYWOMAN
Men worship me! Yes, mere men. But Love, my King, where is he?

PASSION
(*speaks outside*)
Now shall the unstemmed torrent of my desire
Burst from its banks in floods of love and fire.

EVERYWOMAN
'Tis he—Passion! How is it that I tremble when he comes nigh? My cloak—I would I had retained it. Not that I am cold. I burn. I will hide.
(*Tries to slip behind the rock.*)

(PASSION *enters. He is a conventional actor, of fine physique. His voice is sweet and seductive, his actions suggestive of suppressed strength. He wears a highwayman's mask.*)

PASSION
Everywoman, come forth! Why hide
At the approach of Passion?

EVERYWOMAN
(*timidly*)
Art thou indeed King Love?

PASSION

It is for thee
To find thy King. Dost know Love's voice—Love's language?
How to maidens, when in sweet repose,
He cometh? On yonder rock recline while I
My song rehearse.

(*Leading* EVERYWOMAN *to rock.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Thou'rt sure, good sir, that this
Is but rehearsing?

PASSION

Rehearsing, 'tis, in truth,
And practice perfect makes the love-sick youth.

(EVERYWOMAN *reclines at foot of the rock, centre.* MODESTY, *as a vision, is dimly seen within the rock, sheltering* EVERYWOMAN *with outstretched arms.*)

(PASSION *sings.*)

The sun smiles on the virgin snow
So tenderly and true,
Each flake, beneath his loving glow,
Becomes a drop of dew.
The bee from flower the honey sips;
They meet in rapture mute.
He steals the nectar from her lips,
But leaves the luscious fruit.

Be I the sun, the snowflake thou,
The dew a joyful tear;
Be thou the flower, and I the bee,
Thy love the honey clear.
Come, let me fold thee in these arms,
In ecstasy of bliss.
Until thy heart, thy soul, thy charms,
Shall melt in one sweet kiss.

(*On his knees, at the foot of the rock, to which* MODESTY *is bound,* PASSION *stoops and kisscs* EVERYWOMAN.)

EVERYWOMAN

(*dreamily, with her arms around* PASSION)

Art thou, in truth, my King?

PASSION

I am thy King.
Thou art the Queen of Love.

EVERYWOMAN

Ah! Found at last!
At last the arms of Love encircle me,
And freely thus doth Everywoman yield
The tribute of her womanhood.

(*Kisses* PASSION.)

Oh! 'tis sweet
To hear the voice of Flattery. To be acclaimed
A victor in the wars which women wage.
Sweet are a woman's triumphs! But how sweet,
How doubly sweet, when she is vanquished! When

She surrenders to the power, the prowess, the invincible force,
The noble strength of Love, the conqueror! Love, I am thine!

(*Kisses him.*)

MODESTY

Everywoman, fare thee well!

PASSION

Some intruder. Didst thou not hear?

(*Vision of* MODESTY *disappears.*)

EVERYWOMAN

'Tis Modesty.
Modesty again warns me. And as she sighs
"Farewell," there burns on my lips Passion's kisses.
Kisses I craved. Ye gods! I had forgotten Modesty!

PASSION

Nay, heed her not.

(*Seeking to embrace her.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Away! I doubt thee. Fear thee, now.
Art honest? Then why wearest thou a mask?
Show me thy face. Thou'lt not? Thus then I tear
Thy mask away.

(*Tears mask from* PASSION'S *face.*)

Passion, I know thee, now.
Thou art not Love, the King. Thou art a vile

CANTICLE II—*"Passion, I know thee now. Thou art not Love, the King."*

And hideous thing, decked out to "strut and fret
Thine hour upon the stage," and pose and prate,
And when thy part is played, thy mischief done,
To vanish, and be seen no more. Away!
Begone!

(PASSION *cringes off.*)

Thus the stain of Passion's kiss
Shall Everywoman suffer when Modesty hath left her.
O Love! True Love! Pure Love!
The King of Kings! The soul's sweet starlight!
Strength of the weak! Salvation of the doomed!
The God of Everywoman! Come to me! Save me!

(*On knees.*)

(CONSCIENCE *enters.*)

Ah, Conscience! Conscience, comfort me.

(CONSCIENCE *leans tenderly over her.*)

CURTAIN

CANTICLE
III

CANTICLE III—*"Behold your Queen! Men, ye shall bow down and worship Everywoman!"*

CANTICLE III

SCENE: EVERYWOMAN'S *apartments in the city. Night. Windows at back, heavily curtained. A crimson glow from electric lights, only dimly burning. A large supper table set at centre. Many bottles of wine on table. Chairs arranged around table. At right a large mirror. At left a couch. Several reclining chairs. Luxurious furniture.*

DISCOVERED: GROVEL, *in butler's livery, snoozes in armchair.* SNEAK, *in footman's livery, helps himself to wine.* NOBODY *discovered in C. of stage.*

NOBODY

In Everywoman's boudoir, now awaiting her;
Her servitors are secretly berating her.
(*Clock strikes twelve.*)
Behold! 'Tis midnight. Thousands have applauded her,
The homage of a new-found star accord her.
She sups when others sleep. In gay society,
Selected more by chance than with propriety,
She still seeks Love. Absurd infatuation,
Which looks for Love 'mid scenes of dissipation.

When Modesty is lost, and sense of duty flies,
Shall Everywoman weep; for then her beauty dies.

(*Exit.*)

(*The chug-chug of an automobile is heard outside.* GROVEL *wakes, and squirms to the door.* SNEAK *turns up the lights.*)

(*The rattle of an automobile outside is followed by peals of merry laughter.* GROVEL and SNEAK *throw open the doors and bow low.*)

(EVERYWOMAN *enters on the arm of* WEALTH. *She is in automobile costume. Her arms are filled with bouquets and floral tributes. She laughs loudly.*)

(YOUTH *and* BEAUTY, *similarly clad, follow, with* AGE, *whom* YOUTH *has in leading-strings, and* WITLESS, *who has his arm around* BEAUTY. *She looks pale, and walks wearily.*)

(BLUFF, STUFF *and* PUFF, *with* SELF, GREED *and* VANITY, *follow in their wake. The latter three are women. All are in evening dress, the men having fur coats, automobile caps and goggles; the women, wraps and veils.*)

(CONSCIENCE, EVERYWOMAN'S *maid, enters, and stands in the background.*)

EVERYWOMAN

My friends, I bid ye welcome to my home. Grovel and Sneak, see to these gentlemen. Conscience, remove my wraps. Ladies, I would not submit ye to the min-

istrations of so clumsy a maid as mine. I doubt not Puff and Stuff and Bluff will aid ye in disrobing.

(*To* CONSCIENCE.)

There, girl, get thee gone!

(CONSCIENCE *courtesies and exits.*)

WEALTH

(*He is obese and bloated. His head is bald. His nose big and bulbous. His eyes glare greedily. His voice is loud, his manner insolent. On his bosom big diamonds sparkle. He keeps his hands thrust in his pockets.*)

Egad! Thou'rt lucky, Everywoman, to have trained thy handmaiden, Conscience, so that she obeys so readily and vanishes so gracefully.

EVERYWOMAN

Ah! Wealth, thou dost not know the jade hath company manners. When we are alone 'tis she who orders, I who serve. But let us be merry. Why, Youth!

(*laughing*)

Ha! ha! Wealth, doest observe Youth? She hath old Age in leading-strings! That's right, girl. Make him dance a fling. 'Tis right thou shouldst have thy fling. Whirl him around faster! So! Ha! ha!

(YOUTH *swings* AGE *around, while the rest laugh boisterously.*)

AGE

Thou madcap!

(*Panting.*)

Thou wilt be the death o' me. And yet, wilt love me, and I'll dance at mine own funeral.

(*Sinks exhausted into chair.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Youth, ply him with wine. But where is Beauty? My Lord Witless, what aileth her?

WITLESS

(*a vapid, lisping boy*)

I fear me this is a little too late for Beauty. Her cheek is pale, and she feeleth faint.

(*He is fanning* BEAUTY, *who reclines on a couch at left of stage.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Poor tired child!

(*Gets wine and goes to* BEAUTY.)

Drink this.

SELF

(*aside to* VANITY)

An artful minx, that Beauty. What sayest thou, Vanity?

VANITY

(*aside to* SELF)

She faint, forsooth! But a faint for effect. Eh, Greed?

GREED

(*to* SELF *and* VANITY)

A trap to catch the men, my dears. Self, I have seen thee work it better.

EVERYWOMAN
(*to* BEAUTY)

Art better now?

(BEAUTY *smiles wearily.* BLUFF, STUFF and PUFF *converse apart.*)

BLUFF

I tell thee, Stuff, she hath the handling of his purse-strings. Everywoman can win wealth, if she will.

STUFF

'Tis truly said. But how does that help us? We seek an angel, and I fear me he may not entirely fit the part.

PUFF

Angel! Nay, 'tis Ananias thou needest. Now, seest thou. This feast, I, Puff, the Press Agent will so decorate with frills of imagination that in the public writings it shall appear that monkeys sat at her board.

BLUFF

That's why we brought thee hither.

PUFF

That from her pie came forth nude dancing girls. Then shall people flock to see the woman who thus entertains Wealth and Witless.

STUFF

Thou art indeed the Prince of Liars, Puff.

(*Shakes his hand.*)

EVERYWOMAN

(*to* BEAUTY)

There, rest thou there a while.

(*Aloud*)

My friends, the feast awaits us.

(GROVEL *and* SNEAK *place dishes on the table.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Bluff, wilt thou with Self be seated? Stuff, I give thee Greed for companion. Puff, with Vanity as thy mate, thou shouldst be happy. Age still clings to Youth. Wealth, wilt sit by me?

WEALTH

(*not heeding*)

Witless, give me the fan. I'll tend on Beauty.

WITLESS

Nay! Mine be the happy task.

EVERYWOMAN

How now? Am I, then, to sup alone? Is Beauty, ill though she be, more attractive than I? I am thy host, and I command Wealth and Witless to sit on either side of me. Conscience shall tend on Beauty.

(*Touches bell.* CONSCIENCE *enters.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Conscience, the child is sick. I commend her to thy care.

CONSCIENCE

(*Kneels at* BEAUTY'S *couch. The rest pair off, and sit at table.* GROVEL *and* SNEAK *open wine, fill glasses, etc.* EVERYWOMAN *and her guests eat, drink, and make merry. Amid the popping of corks and the laughter of the revelers* CONSCIENCE *sings at* BEAUTY'S *couch.*)

(*Sings*)

A flower was born in a garden fair.
Sing hey! Sing ho! Ninny-nonny.
She sported free, and the morning air
Loved to steal a kiss of her perfume rare.
Sing hey! Sing ho! For my bonny.
But one there came at the noontide hour;
Sing hey! Sing ho! Lack-a-day-dee!
He marked her beauty, he sought her bower
Beneath the spell of her wondrous power,
In a wanton whim, culled the pretty flower.
Sing weep! Sing woe! For my Ladye.

EVERYWOMAN

(*speaking through symphony between verses*)

Wealth, I vow Everywoman finds thee excellent company.

More wine for my Lord Witless. How fares sweet Youth?

YOUTH

Canst thou ask? I have found candies. I am supremely happy.

CONSCIENCE

(*sings*)

From garden fair she was torn away.
Sing hey! Sing ho! Ninny-nonny!
She hid, they say, in a gay bouquet;
She pined in vain for the light of day.
Sing hey! Sing ho! for my bonny.
Her freshness gone, and her perfume fled.
Sing hey! Sing ho! Lack-a-day-dee!
Her petals fall, and she droops her head;
She seeks, in sorrow, her simple bed;
At the dawn of the day she is cold and dead.
Sing weep! Sing woe! for my Ladye.

PUFF

I'll give thee a toast.
(EVERYWOMAN *and guests hammer table and applaud.*)
Here is to Youth—whom all men long to keep!
Here is to Age—to whom we all must creep!
Here is to Wealth—a man's best friend, 'tis said!
Here is to Greed—by whom we all are led!
Here is to Bluff—with whom we seek to win!
Here is to Vanity—we are all her kin!
Here is to Self—the one we love the most!
And here is to Everywoman—our best-loved host.
(*All rise and drink.*)

OMNES

Everywoman!

EVERYWOMAN

I thank thee, for myself and for my merry companions. I would fain be more courteous to my guests, but it groweth late, and Everywoman hath a mission yet unfulfilled.

(*Rising*)

Shall we adjourn?

OMNES

No! no! etc.!

WEALTH

(*taking* BLUFF *aside*)

I prithee tell me, Bluff, what is the secret mission in which Everywoman engages?

BLUFF

She seeketh Love.

WEALTH

Seeketh Love, thou sayest? Well, I will buy the bauble and bestow it on her. Is it a costly thing?

BLUFF

I have been told it is beyond all price.

WEALTH

Bah! Wealth can buy anything. Ho, Youth! Come hither! Tell me, what is this Love that Everywoman seeketh?

YOUTH

Love is a King.

WEALTH

Well, I'll buy him.

YOUTH

Kings may not be bought.

WEALTH

Ho! ho! That is but the opinion of Youth.

(*To* STUFF)

Hist! Stuff! How can I get this thing called Love?

STUFF

Thou canst not get Love—

(*after extending hand*)

not so long as thou keepest thine hands in thy pockets.

WEALTH

That is my custom—when thy hands are near me——
Ha! There is Age! He hath much wisdom, though little wit. Age, a word in thine ear.

AGE

What dost thou say? Speak louder. 'Tis said that money talks, yet Wealth speaks in a whisper to most men.

WEALTH

Thou knowest what Love is?

AGE

Aye! Once on a time I did. But, alas! nowadays Love is dead.

WEALTH

(*aside*)

Love dead! And Everywoman knows it not. Methinks I have an estimable idea. I, Wealth, will pose as Love, assume his title, take his name, and Everywoman will surely consent to be mine.

EVERYWOMAN

(*coming forward*)

Come, friends, a parting drink.

(*All take glasses noisily.* GROVEL *and* SNEAK *fill them.*)

WITLESS

(*intoxicated*)

Aye! A bumper! And I will sing a song.

EVERYWOMAN

(*laughing*)

Boy, thou hast drunk from Circe's cup.

AGE

This wine makes old blood warm.

(*Throws kiss to* EVERYWOMAN)

EVERYWOMAN

And thou hast vinegar in thy veins.

(*All laugh.*)

BLUFF

I vow this nectar makes our star shine brighter.

EVERYWOMAN

But dawn approaches, when all stars must cease to shine.
Come, drink again, and then, I pray you all, begone.

STUFF

Not till we have crowned thee Queen of the Revels.

BLUFF

Everywoman is some man's queen.

PUFF

Everywoman is worthy of a throne.

WEALTH

Here, 'mid the fragments of a feast, will we enthrone her.

(*Places chair on centre of table.*)

OMNES

Bravo! Bravo!

(*They seize* EVERYWOMAN.)

EVERYWOMAN

Nay! I protest! In furtherance of your own whims and conceits, ye handle Everywoman roughly. How wine staineth a man's ill-fitting garb of chivalry! Ye insist? Well, then, I'll mount my throne unaided.

(*Gets on table.*)

Behold your Queen! Men, ye shall bow down and worship Everywoman. Women, ye shall do her homage outwardly, though your souls be consumed with envy.
(*Men kneel and women bow before* EVERYWOMAN.)

OMNES

Long live Everywoman!

EVERYWOMAN

My faithful subjects, I bid ye arise.

OMNES

(*rising*)

A song! A song! A scene! A story!

EVERYWOMAN

Of what shall I speak?

WEALTH

We beseech your gracious majesty, tell of the King, thy consort.

EVERYWOMAN

I have no consort, still of a king I'll tell—King of the Revels.

OMNES

His name! His name!

EVERYWOMAN

Nay, that is a riddle for ye to guess. Who is it laughs when others weep? Listen!

(*Recites to music*)

The miser, he hides all his gold away,
But do as he will, it grows less each day,
Though its hiding-place nobody knows but his wife.
Then who is it laughs at the strife? Ho! ho!

OMNES

Be-elzebub?

EVERYWOMAN

Be-elzebub!

OMNES

Be-elzebub! Ha! ha! Ho! ho!

CONSCIENCE

(*singing over* BEAUTY'S *couch*)

Sing hey! Sing ho! Ninny-nonny!

EVERYWOMAN

The knight takes leave of his ladye love;
On the field of death he will kiss her glove.
But the squire with her lily-white hand makes free.
Then who is it chuckles in glee? Ho! ho!

OMNES

Be-ezlebub?

EVERYWOMAN

Be-ezlebub!

OMNES

Be-ezlebub! Ha! ha! Ho! ho!

CONSCIENCE

Her freshness gone, and her perfume fled,
Her petals fall, and she droops her head;
At the dawn of day she is cold and dead.
Sing weep! Sing woe! for my Ladye!

(*While* CONSCIENCE *sings her last stanza all stand stock-still, the hilarity born of wine, and fostered by* EVERYWOMAN'S *song, slowly fading from their faces.* EVERYWOMAN *sinks to her knees on the table and buries her face in her hands. The clock strikes five.*)

EVERYWOMAN

(*raising her head, her face pale, her hair disordered*)
Conscience! Oh, Conscience! Why wilt thou not sleep,
Save such time as thy mistress doth? My friends,
If friends ye be, I pray you, leave me now.
The Queen of the Revel must submit herself
To the ministrations of her wakeful handmaiden.
Youth, assist me.

(*Descends from table.*)

BLUFF

(*to* STUFF)

A troublesome wench, that Conscience.

STUFF

(*to* BLUFF)

Reminds me of my wife, who, even now,
I fear me, sitteth up for me.

EVERYWOMAN

Youth, let me lean
On thee. Why, little one,
Thy footsteps are unsteady? Too bad! too bad!
I fear that Everywoman treateth her Youth unfairly.
There, sit thee down and rest. Conscience, do thou
Attend on Youth.

(*To guests*)

Good-night! Good-night to all!

(BLUFF, STUFF, PUFF, AGE *and* WITLESS, *each in turn kiss* EVERYWOMAN'S *hand.* SELF, GREED *and* VANITY *bow.*)

(*All guests exit, except* WEALTH, *who remains at the back, unnoticed, glaring unsteadily at* EVERYWOMAN.)

(YOUTH, *in easy-chair, sinks to sleep.*)

EVERYWOMAN

At last I am alone with Youth and Beauty.
Conscience, strip from my back these tawdry trappings.
Help me disrobe. Nay, bring me first the gown
Of purity I wore when first I set me out
Upon my pilgrimage in search of Love.

(CONSCIENCE *exits.*)

Oh, Love! My King! Still hidden from my view.
Where are thou? What thy name?

WEALTH

(*coming down*)

His name is Wealth.

EVERYWOMAN

Thou here? Begone! How darest thou thus intrude?

WEALTH

Thou seekest Love. Behold, I am thy King.
Thy quest is o'er. Dost thou not know 'tis Wealth
That Everywoman seeks? Here at thy feet
I offer priceless gifts.
(*He kneels.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Gifts, sayest thou? Gifts
From Love? That's strange. Methought the King, when found
Would stand erect, in noble attitude.
Nor talk of gifts, nor pay a price, nor buy me,
But command subjection to his will.
I prithee rise, and if, by such strange means,
Thou canst prove that Love and Wealth are one,
I'll hear recital of thine offering.

WEALTH
(*rising*)

A palace in Fifth Avenue; a yacht;
A Newport cottage; a baronial hall
In England; horses, autos, diamonds, gems
To shame an Eastern potentate. From Paris,
Gowns. Pearls from the Orient. A box
Each season at the opera——

EVERYWOMAN

And is it Love
That proffers all these things? I have been told
His Majesty ate cottage fare, and lived
On bread and cheese and kisses. Oh! Well, tell.
If Love in truth thou art, wouldst be my sole
Companion when Youth and Beauty fled?
Wouldst walk contentedly with me when Time
Our tottering footsteps led toward the grave?
Answer in truth.

WEALTH

Egad! If that be thy whim,
I fain must tell thee, Everywoman, that Wealth
Would wish thine attendant graces, Youth and Beauty,
To remain with thee.

EVERYWOMAN

But in thy palace, on
Thy yacht? Just thou and I alone?

WEALTH

Well, yes.
Alone—save that thy Youth and Beauty be
Not banished.

EVERYWOMAN

Morn, noon and night with Love—with thee.

WEALTH

With Love—with me. None else—save Youth and Beauty.

EVERYWOMAN

And when they leave Everywoman, when Time beckons,
And they depart, as at Time's call they must?——

WEALTH

Depart! Then would I seek them once again,
And, with such arts as Wealth is master of,
Decoy them back. For, truth to tell, both Youth
And Beauty have ever been favorites in the kingly Court
of Love.

EVERYWOMAN

Ah! Now *thy* mask is off; I know thee, Wealth.
Thou'rt not a King. Thou hast no throne to offer.
Thou'rt but a Sultan vile, who, with rich gifts,
Wouldst Everywoman, and Youth, and Beauty, and all
such
As pleased thee for a little while, withal,
Lure into slavery within thine harem. Ha! Wretch!
Brute!

WEALTH

A vixen! Well, I'll plead my suit with Youth.

EVERYWOMAN

She sleeps.

WEALTH

Then Beauty will not flout me.

EVERYWOMAN

She
Is sick. Begone!

(*Calling*)
What ho! My servants! Conscience!
(GROVEL, SNEAK *and* CONSCIENCE *enter.*)

EVERYWOMAN
Show Wealth the door. Open the windows wide.
Give us the light of day. Let Heaven's breath
Dispel this foul and irksome atmosphere.
(GROVEL *and* SNEAK *open windows. Daylight streams in, falling on* BEAUTY.)
I hate thee, Wealth! I hate thee! Get thee gone!
I hate myself. I hate the mockery, the shame
Of such a life as this. Love liveth not here.
Youth! Sweet Youth, awaken! Thou and I
And Beauty will go hence. Go back to Truth.
The witch, the fortune-teller, will lead us aright.
Beauty, my Beauty, I will nurse thee, tend thee well.
(*Going toward* BEAUTY.)

CONSCIENCE
(*stopping* EVERYWOMAN)
Too late, too late!

EVERYWOMAN
What meanest thou?

CONSCIENCE
Alas! that Conscience
Must tell thee terrible tidings. Beauty is lost
To thee forever.

EVERYWOMAN

Beauty lost?

CONSCIENCE

She's dead.

(YOUTH *faints in arms of* CONSCIENCE.)

EVERYWOMAN

(*horrified*)

Dead! Dead!

(*Rushes to* BEAUTY'S *couch and kisses her.*)

Lips cold! My Beauty gone! Ah! No!
It cannot be true!

CONSCIENCE

Observe thy mirror, where Flattery was wont
To dwell.

EVERYWOMAN

(*Staggers across to mirror and gazes in horror*)

(TRUTH *is seen in the mirror.*)

That is not I—that hideous face!

(*To mirror*)

I know thee! Thou art Truth—beloved by Nobody.
Back to thy well, thou witch, and drown thyself
In water!

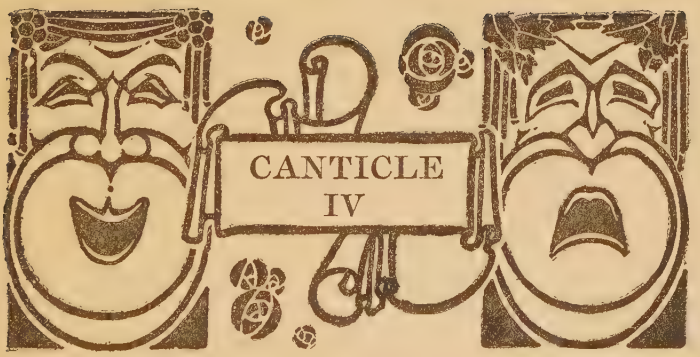
(*Hurls bottle at mirror.*)

Wine for me. For Everywoman.
Wealth is still with her. Wine for Wealth.

(*To* WEALTH)

Wilt dance?
See! Everywoman leads Wealth a merry dance.
(*Takes* WEALTH'S *hand. Both sing loudly and dance wildly.*)
Be-elzebub! Be-elzebub! Be-elzebub! Ha! ha! Ho! ho!

CURTAIN


CANTICLE
IV

CANTICLE IV—*New Year's Eve on Broadway.*

CANTICLE IV

SCENE: *A street. At R. C. a fashionable supper establishment, with imposing entrance, and gaily illuminated windows, with shades down. The street branches off up left, a portion of a church being just visible. Moonlight. Snow falls at intervals.*

TIME: *New Year's Eve. Broadway crowd effect and musical medley.*

NOBODY *enters after crowd has gradually gone off.*

NOBODY

Ha! ha! Ho! ho! This is the Gay White Way,
With good intentions paved, the poets say.
"A little street in Heaven," so they tell.
Trust Nobody. It leads direct to Hell.
Here Everywoman, mayhap every man,
Seeks solace or excitement. Futile plan.
Poor foolish mortals! Little do they know
Here Nobody is happy. Ha! ha! Ho! ho!
I, Nobody, must your forgiveness pray
For showing decent folk the Gay White Way,
Where all is artificial: Love a sham,

Wisdom a wolf, and honesty a lamb.
But still, while I your pardon humbly ask,
Please recollect, mine is the unthankful task
To bare the pitfalls, and the folly prove,
When Everywoman goes in search of Love.
I stay too long. All hours of day or night,
On Gay White Way, 'tis rarely I'm in sight.
And here comes Vice. Nobody recognizes
The jade, who hath a million of disguises;
Close in her wake are fools, a motley crew;
Pursuing them are rogues, and wantons, too;
Wolf, vulture, serpent, lamb, pigeon and ass.
So let the Gay White Way procession pass.

(NOBODY *steps politely aside and exits, as* VICE, *disguised as an attractive young woman, trips on, singing and dancing.*)

VICE

Full of glee, follow me.
Where's the moth loves not the bright light?
Siren, I. Living lie.
I'm the spirit of the White Light.

FOOLS

Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah!
We're the rising generation.
Pa, you know, made the dough
Which we blow in dissipation.

CHORUS OF GIRLS

Giddy girls, flaunting pearls,
Decked in garments gay and gorgeous,

Laughing loud, swell the crowd
At all bacchanalian orgies.

(ROGUES, GAMBLERS, STOCKBROKERS, *and other* VAGABONDS, *enter, singing in chorus.*)

CHORUS

We are crooks, but our looks
  And our manners are deceiving.
Honest graft is our craft—
  Impolite to call it thieving.

(FOOLS *flirt with* VICE. ROGUES, VAGABONDS, *etc., cross stage, each lifting his hat to* VICE *as he passes. The last one chucks her under the chin. One* FOOL *resents this. A fight begins.* LAW *and* ORDER, *in the uniform of policemen, enter, and seize the combatants.* THE FOOL *gives* LAW *money. The* ROGUE *shows his card to* ORDER, *who touches his hat respectfully. The* ROGUE *and* FOOL *exit, arm in arm, in one direction,* LAW *and* ORDER *march off in the other. Snow begins to fall.*)

(EVERYWOMAN *enters. She is shabbily dressed, and looks ill and emaciated. She clings to* YOUTH.)

YOUTH

Oh! Everywoman! Whither goest thou?
I fain would be thy shadow, but I feel
My limbs are growing weak, and at my heart
There lies a sickly fear lest Time, the callboy,

Shouldst tear me from thee. Those there are who say
That Time hath sworn to kill thy Youth, 'cause thou,
O Everywoman, in wantonness, hath tried,
Ever and anon, to kill Time.

EVERYWOMAN

Nay! Bear up.
Cheer up, my Youth. Thou art my only hope.
Without thine aid how can I seek to win
The laurels I have lost? Thou knowest well,
When Beauty died, the fickle friends who once
Installed me as a star, forsook me, scorned me.
Yet I still have thee, and Everywoman
Loves her Youth more fondly year by year.
Within these portals, where merriment unchecked
Hath sway, we may find one who can restore
Thy peace—my happiness.

YOUTH

Thou seekest Love?

EVERYWOMAN

I seek—— Well, what doth Everywoman seek
Who knows not Love? Whose quest hath been in vain?
'Tis Wealth I seek. Nay, Youth, thou shalt not shrink
From me. Dost recollect, at Beauty's grave
Wealth bade me a cold good-by? Till then he was
My slave. I owned him, body and soul. Now, thou
And I will win him back again.

YOUTH

(*shuddering*)

No! no! 'Twas Wealth caused all our woe!

TRUTH

(*an old witch, hobbles on*)

Charity! Charity! I seek.

EVERYWOMAN

Now, Youth, behold!
Here's Poverty. Let's question her, and see
If Wealth or Poverty the kindlier be.
(*To* TRUTH)
Old woman, of thy wisdom, prithee, tell us
What is true happiness? Where can it be found?

TRUTH

A myth—a mocking mirage. A poet's dream.
The fleeting substance of a maniac's scheme.
A will-o'-the-wisp is happiness. When sought,
'Tis ever out of reach; 'tis never caught.
A timid, hunted hare—in its pursuit
Woman becomes a wanton, man a brute.
Yet happiness shall surely come apace
To those who take no pleasure in the chase.
I tell thee—warn thee, Everywoman, Youth,
If happiness thou seekest, follow Truth.
Charity! Charity, I seek.
(*She exits.*)

EVERYWOMAN

She asketh alms,
Poor wretch! Yet speaketh she of happiness
As if akin to it—and she is poor. Absurd!

YOUTH

Nay, Everywoman, art thou sure thou'rt right?
Her cry was, "Charity, I seek."

EVERYWOMAN

A foolish quest,
Along the Gay White Way, where 'tis unknown.

YOUTH

But was it merely Poverty that spoke
Those wondrous words?
(*Looking off at* TRUTH)
Ah! Now I know that form.
Hast thou forgotten how, long years ago,
She dwelt within thy garden? Dost recall
Her word of warning, ere thy quest for Love,
Thy perilous pilgrimage, began? 'Twas Truth
That spoke. Hath Everywoman forgotten Truth?

EVERYWOMAN

Truth? I know not Truth.

YOUTH

And yet, bethink ye,
There was a time when we sought counsel with her.

EVERYWOMAN

Yes. Now I do recall. She was beloved
By Nobody. Crippled, distorted, though somewhat fair
Of face.

YOUTH

Her voice was ever sweet.

EVERYWOMAN

But not
So sweet as the voice of Flattery. Dost recollect,
She vanished when he spoke? Now he is mute.
No more he smiles on me, no more he tells
Of the king I seek. That night, when Beauty died,
I to my mirror went. Where Flattery was wont to dwell
I saw a face—not mine, not his. Oh, God!
'Twas horrible! It maddened me. But now I understand.
I looked on Truth. Truth haunts me, grins at me, lurks
In my mirror, comes uninvited. Now in guise
Of Poverty she comes. Ah! Youth, sweet Youth,
Hide me from Truth. I dare not, dare not face her.

(*Buries head in* YOUTH'S *shawl.*)

(*Chorus of merrymakers is heard within the supper-room.*)

CHORUS

Sing a merry song to Venus,
Clothe her in a garb of vine.
Clink your glasses,
Kiss your lasses.
Love is ever born of wine.

Fill a flowing bowl to Bacchus,
  Hail him as a god above.
Burning kisses crown your bliss.
  Wine is ever sire to Love.

(*During chorus,* EVERYWOMAN *and* YOUTH *crouch on portico, listening.*)

(*At the end of chorus the chimes of church bells are heard.*)

(TIME *enters stealthily, folding his cloak around him, and clutching a dagger in his hand. He stands aloof.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Wealth is there. Didst thou not recognize
His voice above the din?

YOUTH

Oh, Everywoman! Hark!
The church bells call to prayer. A New Year's born.
Let us seek Truth.

(*Trying to draw* EVERYWOMAN *away.*)

EVERYWOMAN

No. I must again win Wealth.

YOUTH

And what of Love?

EVERYWOMAN

Well, what? Harken—

(*mocking chorus hysterically*)

"Clink your glasses,
Kiss your lasses,
Love is ever born of wine."

YOUTH
(*pleadingly*)

Everywoman, come away.

EVERYWOMAN
(*repulsing* YOUTH)

Hands off! Thou, Youth, whose aid I counted on,
Thou, too, wouldst leave me? Well, I care not. Go!
If thou wilt. Get thee to church. I need
Thee not.

YOUTH

Oh! Everywoman!

EVERYWOMAN

I tell thee go!
Thou art a puny thing. No fit companion, thou,
For such as I.

YOUTH

But thou lovest me?

EVERYWOMAN
(*turning angrily on* YOUTH)

No. 'Twas thou
Didst first lead Everywoman astray. 'Twas thou

Didst tell her that the Love she sought might well
Be found within the playhouses of the city.
Thou, Youth. At thy prompting, I,
Mistaking Passion for Love, lost Modesty. Why,
Thou canting Youth, didst thou not gaily flirt
With tottering old Age while Beauty lay a-dying?
Thou renegade! Thou hypocrite! Get thee gone! 'Tis time.

(*Goes to portico.*)

YOUTH

(*sees* TIME *lurking near, and shudders*)
Ha!
Thou'rt right. 'Tis Time, the callboy of the soul,
Who comes to warn us for our final scene prepare.
Well, I am ready. But Time, oh, stay thy hand
Till I once more shall enter the holy church
Where Charity, God's envoy and ambassador,
In saintly stole and chasuble, freely granteth
Absolution to Youth and Age alike.
Everywoman, thou drivest me hence. Farewell!
(TIME *glides away, beckoning.* YOUTH *follows. They exeunt.*)

(*The doors of the supper-room are thrown open, and* WEALTH *appears in portals, lighting a cigar.*)

EVERYWOMAN

'Tis Wealth. Now wisdom be my guide. No more
The follies of Youth shall hamper me. I'll stand
Aside, and meet him, as it seemeth, by accident.

(*Exits, R.*)

Canticle IV—"*To Thee, the valley of the soul who comes to save us for our final home prepare.*"

(*A shower of confetti covers* WEALTH, *and a peal of women's laughter from the supper-room greets him as he turns.*)

(*The* ROGUES *and* VAGABONDS *enter from either side, blowing horns, and expressing their joy at the birth of a new year by idiotic actions. They stand in line on either side of the supper-room portico, forming an aisle. From the portals flock* GREED, SELF, VANITY, *and other social moths and parasites; also* PASSION. *The women pelt* WEALTH *with confetti, and enmesh him in colored paper ribbons. All sing.*)

(PASSION, *solo; and Chorus.*)

PASSION

(*Sings*)

I sing in praise of Wealth
The patron saint of Passion.
The uncrowned king of every man,
To every woman dear.
Comes he by birth or stealth,
'Tis he who sets the fashion.
Let woe take wing
For Wealth can bring
A happy and gay New Year.

CHORUS

A happy New Year! A happy New Year!
To the multi-millionaire!
We worship Wealth,
And drink his health,

So long as he's money to spare.
A happy New Year! A happy New Year!
And a life of merry good cheer!
Woman or man,
Who knows Wealth, can
Be sure of a happy New Year.

PASSION

'Tis Wealth that crowns our joy,
'Tis Wealth that fills our glasses;
Wealth turns our water into wine,
Uplifts us from our bier.
In caste or *hoi polloi*
'Tis Wealth that wins our lasses;
The King of Kings
Is Wealth, who brings
A happy and gay New Year.

CHORUS

"A happy New Year," etc.

WEALTH

Begone! The feast is over. Who will call my carriage?

ROGUES AND VAGABONDS

I—and I—and I——

(*All exit hurriedly, L.*)

WEALTH

Wealth bids, and all obey.

(*To women*)

Which of ye will ride with me?

WOMEN AND CHORUS GIRLS

I—and I—and I——

WEALTH

Think ye Wealth packs his chariot like a public car? Begone! Escorts await ye within. Wealth hath full accounting made. There's nothing left unpaid. So go!

WOMEN AND GIRLS

(*Exeunt into supper-room, singing*)

'A happy New Year! A happy New Year!

(EVERYWOMAN *enters, pensively, and seemingly preoccupied.*)

WEALTH

'A woman—and alone. Fitting sport for Wealth.

(*Intercepts* EVERYWOMAN, *and lifts his hat.*)

Good evening, little girl!

EVERYWOMAN

Sir!

(*Starts indignantly.*)

(*Looks at him, hesitates, then advances cordially.*)

Why!—how farest thou? In truth, I'm glad to greet Thee once again.

WEALTH

Thou knowest me?

EVERYWOMAN

Right well.

Hast thou so soon forgotten?

WEALTH

No. Thou art Everywoman.
Egad! But thou hast changed! Thy cheeks are pale
And shrunken. In thine eyes there is no flame.
Thy form lacks grace and roundness. Then thy garb—
I see. Thou wouldst ask alms of me. Alack!
Thy time is all ill chosen. Others, to-night,
Have ripped my purse asunder. Prithee, pass along.

EVERYWOMAN

What of those princely gifts, Love's offering? "A palace
On Fifth Avenue. A yacht——"

WEALTH

Pooh! pooh!

EVERYWOMAN

"With gems to shame an Eastern potentate——"

WEALTH

Stand by! I know thee not. Ah! Who comes here?
A woman—and alone. More fitting sport for Wealth.
(VICE *enters, L., pensive, and seemingly preoccupied.*)
(WEALTH *intercepts* VICE, *and lifts his hat.*)
Good evening, little girl.

VICE

Sir!

(*starting indignantly*)

(*She looks at him, hesitates, then advances cordially.*)

VICE

Why!—how farest thou? In truth, I'm glad to greet
Thee once again.

WEALTH

Thou knowest me?

VICE

Right well.
Hast thou so soon forgotten?

WEALTH

Artful minx!
I ne'er saw thee before. But still, thy cheeks
Are plump and pink. Thine eyes flash tempting flame.
Thy form alluring is. Wilt ride with me?
(WEALTH *exits, R., with* VICE *on his arm.*)

EVERYWOMAN

Thus man, for painted Vice, doth Everywoman forsake.
I am alone. An outcast. Modesty lost to me.
My Beauty dead. And Youth——
'Tis Youth, sweet Youth! My Youth! Cruel Time hath slain her.
Charity chants, and Conscience sings her requiem.

(*Four* ACOLYTES, *followed by four men, enter, marching solemnly down the street from up left, and bearing a bier, on which lies the body of* YOUTH. CHARITY, *a minister of the church, in robes of white, leads;* CONSCIENCE, *in black garb, follows.*)

CHARITY

(*chanting*)

Behold! Time heweth us down, even as the reaper,
With his scythe, moweth the fairest flowers of the field.

CONSCIENCE

(*sings*)

Sing hey! Sing ho! Lack-a-day-dee!

CHARITY

The budding lily sporteth gaily in the vernal sunshine.
Time calleth the noontide scene, and the blossom rejoiceth in the fullness of its beauty.
Then night cometh, when all things must sleep.

CONSCIENCE

Sing hey! Sing ho! For my bonny.

CHARITY

But walk ye in righteousness. Follow Truth, and the King of Kings,
The mighty Harvester of Humanity, shall glean ye for his garner.

CONSCIENCE

Sing weep! Sing woe! For my Ladye!

(CHARITY, *bier bearers and* CONSCIENCE *exeunt, R.*)

EVERYWOMAN

"Walk in righteousness! Follow Truth!" Alas!
That Everywoman should hear the voice of Charity

Only when Youth and Beauty have departed!
Was it a sin to seek for Love? If so,
E'en sinners before the judgment seat may plead,
In extenuation.

(*Kneeling in the snow*)

Ye gracious gods! More merciful
Than purblind mortals, judge not Everywoman—
As the world doth judge her—harshly, and unheard.
What wisdom hath she to guide her? Youth and Beauty?
Sweet companions, but fragile, frail, and prone
To foolish fancies. Modesty? Best of friends
To Everywoman, but scorned by every man.
Those her advisers. Even they not proof
Against the insidious tongue of Flattery. If
She fall—if one false step leads down the path
To perdition—her Youth and Beauty dead, oh! who
Will lend a kindly hand to lead her back again?
Ye gods of mercy! In the whole wide world
Is there no hope for such a one? I cry
For help! Help! Who will answer?

NOBODY

(*who has entered unobserved*)

Nobody!

EVERYWOMAN

Who spoke? That voice! It warned me long ago.
Speak on! I listen!

NOBODY

Everywoman, the time
Hath come to thee when Nobody is thy friend.

Thou lovest Nobody. Upon Nobody's breast
Shalt pillow thine aching head. Thy scalding tears
With tenderness shall Nobody brush aside.
(NOBODY *bends to embrace her*)

EVERYWOMAN
(*starting up in horror*)
Ah! No! no! Don't touch me!
I hate thee! I hate Nobody!
Help! Help! Is there no help, no other hope
For Everywoman?

TRUTH
(*hobbling on*)
Charity! Charity!

EVERYWOMAN
Ha! Truth! 'Tis Truth, sweet Truth.
I know thee now. Welcome! Welcome!
(*Embracing* TRUTH.)
Why, Truth, how fair thou art!
I would that Everywoman wore thy features.
If I speak falsely, scourge me! What? Thy whip
Thou carriest no longer. Thou dost not need thy crutch?
Give it to me. I am lame, crippled, fallen by the way.
Within thine hand take mine.

TRUTH
(*offering hand*)
Wilt walk with Truth?

EVERYWOMAN

Aye, that I will,
For evermore.

(EVERYWOMAN *kisses hand of* TRUTH.)

(*The church chimes ring again.*)

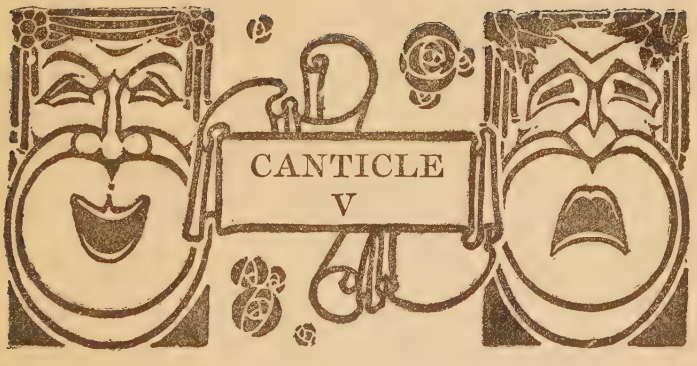
(EVERYWOMAN *walking with* TRUTH.)

Charity! Charity for Everywoman, I ask.

(TRUTH *leads* EVERYWOMAN *toward church.*)

(*Organ peals, and surpliced choir files into church singing.*)

CURTAIN


CANTICLE
V

CANTICLE V

SCENE: EVERYWOMAN'S *old home. The same as Scene I. It has a deserted appearance. The windows are closed. Night outside. Snow falling. The room is dark, save for the glow of a fire which burns cheerily on the hearth. A big lounging-chair is drawn up to the fireplace.*

DISCOVERED: KING LOVE THE FIRST *is discovered lounging in chair. He sleeps. He wears no regal robe, but is simply clad. A crown of thorns and roses, intermingled, lies at his feet. The mirror in which Flattery was first seen is broken.*

NOBODY

(*Enters, and speaks*)

In Everywoman's deserted home,
Whence Flattery tempted her to roam,
And filled her simple mind with thoughts accursed—
While she is battling with life's storm,

Hugging the fire, to keep it warm,
In cosy nook reclines King Love the First,
Patience personified. But now
His crown has fallen from his brow,
And, weary with the vigil that he keeps,
Though Everywoman may return,
So long as household fires burn.
E'en Love is merely mortal, and he sleeps.
As chorus of this simple play,
There's little left for me to say,
And little left that Nobody can prove.
Though Time may rob her of her Youth,
If Everywoman is led by Truth,
It follows she will surely waken Love.

(EVERYWOMAN, *led by* TRUTH, *who holds aloft a lantern, passes the window.*)

NOBODY

She comes. The soul within her breast,
A wounded dove that seeks its nest,
But knows not that its mate awaits it there.
She comes. Truth sheds a hallowed light
Upon her path. Good-night! Good-night!
Let Nobody retire before its glare.

(*Exits.*)

(TRUTH *enters leading* EVERYWOMAN *by the hand.* TRUTH *now stands erect, and, in spite of her witch's costume, is fair to see. Over her head she carries an old-fashioned lantern, which shines brilliantly as a searchlight.* EVERYWOMAN, *gray-headed, and no longer beautiful, but with peaceful countenance, carries* TRUTH'S *crutches.*)

TRUTH

Everywoman, through the dismal night
The light of Truth hath led thee, weak and worn,
But with unfaltering steps.

EVERYWOMAN

Why, Truth! Hast led me home again?

TRUTH

There! Rest thee here a while.
(*Leads* EVERYWOMAN *to chair, R.*)

EVERYWOMAN
(*sitting*)

Thou wilt not leave me, Truth? Ah! Don't! I fear
To be alone.

TRUTH

It is not well thou shouldst.
It is but right that unto Everywoman
A mate, by Truth well chosen, should be brought.

LOVE

Who speaketh of Truth?
(*holding out arms*)
Mother!

TRUTH

My son! My dearly beloved son!
(LOVE *and* TRUTH *embrace tenderly.*)

EVERYWOMAN
(*in astonishment*)

Thy son! I did not know——

TRUTH

No. 'Tis not given
For Everywoman, until her hair grows gray,
To know that Love is ever born of Truth;
That Truth is mother to Love.

LOVE

Though yet unknown to thee, when thou
Didst dwell in this, thine house, I
Thy neighbor was.
Well, when thou didst leave it who more fittingly
Could keep aglow the embers on thy hearth?
Could guard with care thy household goods? Could leave
The latchstring out and patiently await
And see that kindly welcome were not wanting
On thy return? Could Love such duties shirk?

EVERYWOMAN

So thou art Love!
Art thou indeed a King? King Love the First?
Where is thy throne?

LOVE

Within thy heart, O Everywoman!

EVERYWOMAN

Where is thy kingdom?

LOVE

In Everywoman's home.

EVERYWOMAN

Where is thy crown?

LOVE

At thy feet.

EVERYWOMAN

(*picking up crown*)
Why, this is but a garland of briers and roses!

LOVE

I fain would place it on thy brow.
Wilt be my Queen?

EVERYWOMAN

I am unworthy! Nay!
Nay! Let me at thy feet remain. Why, Love,
How strong thou art! Love lifteth Everywoman up.

LOVE

Wilt be——

EVERYWOMAN

Thy loyal subject. Thou shalt be
My King. Oh, Love! How noble thou art!
And how close thou holdest me!
Not that I mind, for I am thine—all thine!
(*They are about to kiss, when* MODESTY *knocks at the door.*)

MODESTY

(*outside*)

Shelter! Shelter, I crave!

TRUTH

A benighted traveler knocks.

LOVE

We would be alone.

TRUTH

My son, the snow falls fast. The night is cold.
Everywoman, what sayest thou?

EVERYWOMAN

I have Love, I have Truth. Henceforth, all who knock at my door,
Shall find it opens unto happiness. Come in!
(TRUTH *opens door.* MODESTY *enters, agitated.*)
Modesty! Thank God! Thou hast returned to me.
(*Embraces her.*)

MODESTY

I have escaped. They bound me, tortured me, sought to slay thy Modesty.

CANTICLE V—*"God guard thee."*

EVERYWOMAN

Yes! yes! But in my heart I knew
Right well thou wouldst return to me when Love,
True Love, was found.

TRUTH

Love, my son, with me
Till morn shalt thou abide. Everywoman at the church,
Where, through Charity, sins and follies of mankind
Find full forgiveness, Love and I will wait
Thy coming. There shall Love the First, thy King,
Crown Everywoman his Queen. Come, Love!
(*Holds out hands.*)

MODESTY

(*extending arms*)
Everywoman,
Come!

EVERYWOMAN

(*kissing* LOVE)
'Til morn.

LOVE

(*kissing* EVERYWOMAN)
'Til dawn.

EVERYWOMAN AND LOVE

God guard thee!

(EVERYWOMAN *ascends staircase with* MODESTY, *looking back at* LOVE. LOVE *goes to door with* TRUTH, *looking back at* EVERYWOMAN. *As all exeunt,* NOBODY *enters.*)

NOBODY

The play is ended. This the cue,
For Nobody to bid adieu.
But first he'll ask you, in the author's name,
Be merciful, be just, be fair
To Everywoman, everywhere.
Her faults are many. Nobody's the blame.

CURTAIN